

Headwaters staff receive COVID-19 vaccine

Written By ALYSSA PARKHILL

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

As the Province continues distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) staff were thrilled the vaccine has arrived in the Region.

The Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph region received their first shipment of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine last week and Public Health has launched a vaccination program for staff and residents at long term care and retirement homes.

Brampton's William Osler Health System has opening up a vaccination clinic dedicated for distributing these vaccinations and HHCC staff members have been given the opportunity to use the clinic as well, where availability is permitted.

Registered Nurse at HHCC's Emergency Department Rachel Kalas was the very first staff member to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Kalas is a high-risk healthcare provider and has been since the beginning.

"This is an emotional moment for me. It has been such a journey navigating this pandemic; from my home life to work life and everything in between. I feel like this vaccine is a symbol of hope that we won't have to balance the weight of the pandemic as much anymore," said Kalas in a statement.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, HHCC has reported 70 inpatients, 42 staff members and physicians have tested positive for the virus.

With the numbers of positive cases within the province continuing to climb to all-time high numbers, the hospital is expecting their numbers to increase of the next couple months.

As of January 11, 8,859 daily doses have been distributed, 122,105 in total, with 5,884 vaccinations being complete. The vaccine is a two-dose vaccination, each administered a few weeks apart.

As Phase 1 of the vaccination distribution continues with health care workers in hospitals, long-term care and retirement homes, as well as remote Indigenous communities, Phase 2 is to be starting this winter.

The second phase includes, like phase one, vaccinations of health care and long-term care workers, but will also include residents at the homes as well as home care patients with chronic conditions.

"I am extremely grateful to our community partners for creating opportunities to protect our staff and physicians against COVID-19. The arrival of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in our region is encouraging and I am hopeful with the current public health restrictions in place, along with continued adherence to public health guidelines we will soon start to see the results we are all hoping for and working hard to achieve," said Kim Delahunt, President & CEO of Headwaters Health Care Centre.

The Province's framework set for hospitals staff and physicians continues to determine proper care and surgeries based on the number of COVID-19 cases, supply of personal protective equipment and medications, capacity of inpatient and intensive care unit bed and health human resources as well as outside care for patients after being discharged.

Surgeries are being prioritized by the patient's condition, type of procedure, risks of putting off the surgery and resources required.

For further information, please visit [Ontario.ca](#), or [headwatershealth.ca](#).